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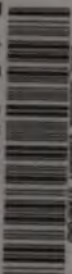
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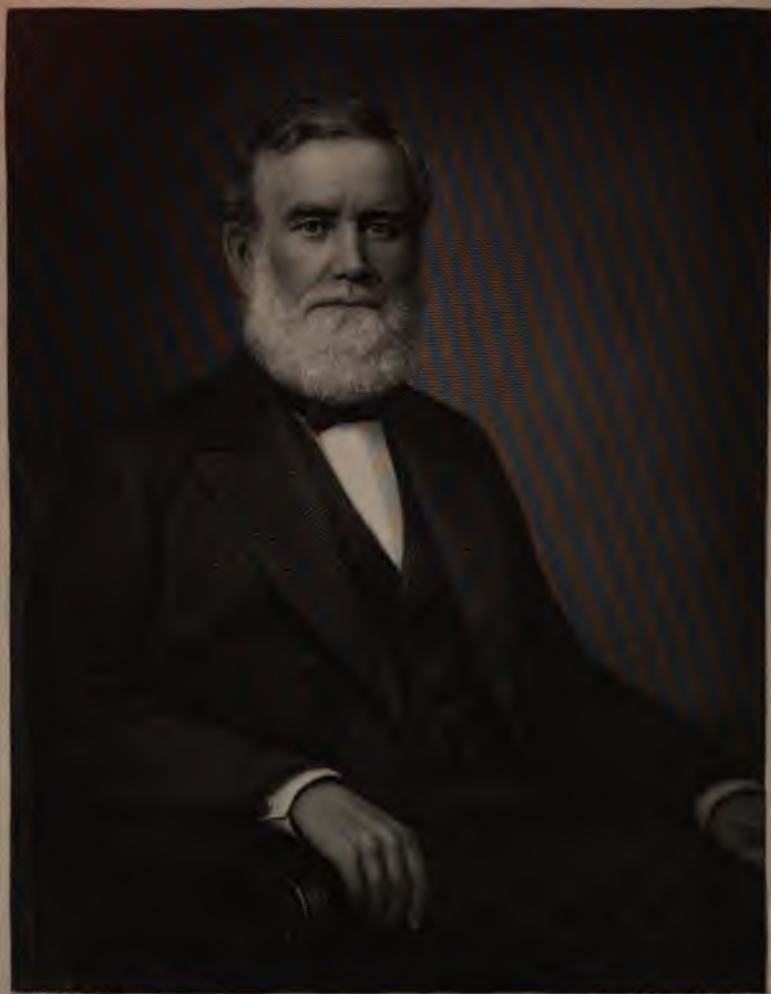
**Born, April 5, 1810**

**Died, August 28, 1881**









Painted by W. H. Russell.

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*Abram DuBois*

The University of



of the

THE UNIVERSITY OF



1871

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John W. [illegible]

# In Memoriam

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OF

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*This biographical memoir, in abstract, was read before the New York State Medical Association at its ninth annual meeting, held in the city of New York, November 15, 16, and 17, 1892. It has since been enlarged and altered to conform to the opinions of the family and friends.*

*S. S. P.*



## In Memoriam.

THE life labor of the true physician is made up of acts for the betterment of humanity. It was the physician's benevolence and self-devotion to the sick that earned for him from his Divine Master the designation of "the beloved physician." In all communities his death is regarded as a public loss, and particularly so is this the case when, in advancing years, his labors have been supplemented by unostentatious charity. The subject of this memorial died in the city of New York, on the twenty-ninth day of August, 1891, and the funeral rites relating to his death were solemnized at his residence, 16 West 30th St., on Sept. 2d. A large attendance of friends, and distinguished members of the medical profession, were present on the occasion. He was an honored member of the medical profession. He was cut down by the grim messenger like a shock of corn ripe in its season. It is a wise custom, fragrant with sweet influence, that makes it a duty to halt for a brief period from usual labors and pay a tribute of praise to the memory of departed friends, to enumerate their virtues and commemorate their



labors. To the personal friends of Dr. Du Bois but little can be said which will add to the sum of their recollections of his generous impulses and many virtues; but there are those who are enjoying the fruits of his wise counsels, and the benefits of his earnest and indefatigable labors, who are not familiar with the events of his life.

On Dr. Du Bois' paternal side he was of French Huguenot descent, his first ancestor in America being Jaques Du Bois, father of Peter Du Bois who was born in Holland in 1674, and came to America the same year with his parents, and finally settled near Wiltwyck, now Kingston, N. Y. Peter Du Bois married Jannetje Burhans.

The subject of this memoir was a descendant of Jaques Du Bois in the fifth generation, and was the fourth son of Coert Du Bois and Mary Thorn. He was born in Red Hook, Dutchess County, N. Y., on the fifth day of April, 1810. Shortly after his birth his parents removed to Rhinebeck, where he remained until he was fifteen years old. He was then sent to a private school kept by a Mr. Holcomb at Granby, Conn., where he was fitted for college. In 1827-28 he entered the sophomore class of Washington (now Trinity) College in Hartford, Conn. He was graduated in arts from that institution in 1830. He then returned to Rhinebeck, where he com-

menced the study of medicine under the direction of Drs. Platt and Nelson. In 1832, by the advice of Dr. Nelson, he came to this city and entered the office of Dr. John Kearny Rodgers as a pupil. He found in Dr. Rodgers an able teacher and a kind and ever valued friend. It was to him, he said, that he was largely indebted for the success he afterward attained. He always remembered this kindness.

In 1832 he entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons as a student, then located in Barclay Street, and in which his preceptor was demonstrator of anatomy. He received the degree of doctor of medicine from that institution in 1835. It was during the last two years of his pupilage that he discharged the duties of an assistant to Dr. Benjamin Ogden, who was then resident physician of Bellevue Almshouse Hospital. In the July following his graduation, with the advice of his friend and preceptor, he sailed from New York for Paris, where he followed with diligence and commendable assiduity the clinics of Louis, Andral, and Chomel, in medicine, and Velpeau, Lisfranc, and Sichel, in surgery. He returned to New York in the month of December, 1836; and shortly after, he and his former associate, Dr. D. L. Eigenbrodt, received the appointment of assistant resident physicians to Bellevue Hospital, which was

still under the care of Dr. Ogden. Soon after entering upon their duties in that hospital, Dr. Ogden was appointed resident physician of Bloomingdale Asylum for the insane, and while nominally retaining the position of resident physician, he relinquished the duties and compensation incident to the office to Drs. Du Bois and Eigenbrodt. He frequently said that this appointment was of the greatest value to him, as it afforded him ample opportunity for testing, in daily practice, the views of Louis and other distinguished teachers of Paris.

During this second residence in Bellevue an epidemic of typhoid fever prevailed in this city, and the wards of the hospital were filled with patients suffering from this disease. The physicians of the city, he said, named it jail fever, ship fever, and camp fever, and their treatment consisted in bleeding and in administering calomel, James powder, spiritus minderis, etc. Dr. Du Bois and his associate, in consultation with Dr. John A. Swett, who was their fellow student while in Paris, advised that a long, narrow, two-story building on the hospital grounds, which had been used for small-pox cases, be converted into a fever ward. This building was thoroughly fumigated, cleansed, and refurnished, and all typhoid cases were transferred at once to it. The treatment in vogue was changed to

the following: Cold sponging, cooling effervescent drinks, plenty of fresh air until the fever had subsided, and then small doses of quinine, with more nourishing food and stimulants. Under this treatment the mortality greatly diminished, and it continued to do so until the epidemic ceased. As an evidence of the virulence of the epidemic, it may be said that Dr. Du Bois and Dr. Swett were both attacked with the disease, and after a lingering convalescence recovered. He often remarked that the experience he acquired in the treatment of diseases during his residence in this hospital was of the greatest service to him in after years of practice. On retiring from the management of the hospital, the commissioners of the Almshouse, in appreciation of Drs. Du Bois and Eigenbrodt's faithful service, presented each with a valuable case of surgical instruments, accompanied by appropriate resolutions. (See page 18.)

Dr. Du Bois, owing to his close relations and intimate friendship with Dr. Rodgers, became strongly interested in ophthalmic medicine and surgery, and while in Paris listened attentively to the lectures and clinics of Jules Sichel, the most eminent practitioner and teacher of ophthalmic medicine of that day. In his preceptor's most important operations upon the eye he was his assistant,

and these relations led to his appointment in 1843 as surgeon of the New York Eye Infirmary, then under the direction of Drs. Delafield, Rodgers, and Wilkes, and located at 47 Howard Street, New York. It was here that the writer made his acquaintance, in 1844, while attending the clinic of the Infirmary. It was his privilege as well as pleasure, to listen there to Du Bois' teachings and to observe the results of his skillful treatment. As surgeon, secretary, trustee, and vice-president, he served this institution faithfully for forty-eight years, or up to the time of his death. He ever felt a warm and enduring interest in this worthy and noble charity, as evidenced by his large contributions toward its support and development, which interest has been most generously continued by the surviving members of his family, who have presented the Infirmary with a sum sufficient to erect a pavilion in his memory, to be called the Abram Du Bois Pavilion.

In the churchyard of the First Reformed Dutch Church of Fishkill Village lie buried the remains of many of the early ancestors of Dr. Du Bois. Here Peter Du Bois the immigrant, the son of Jaques Du Bois, rests. Here also was buried Christian Du Bois, Jr., his grandfather. The churchyard of the hamlet in which his ancestors sleep was to him ever

a matter of interest, and led him, no doubt, to desire its preservation and improvement. His gifts for this purpose were of an important and lasting kind. The beautiful mortuary chapel of the Fish-kill Rural Cemetery—in which cemetery lie buried his remains—was a gift which called forth expressions of grateful respect from the Board of Trustees. (See p. 30.)

Dr. Du Bois held numerous offices of honor and trust in the profession of medicine and in society. He was consulting surgeon to the New York Institution for the Blind; consulting surgeon to the Northern Dispensary; consulting physician to the Home for Incurables; honorary fellow and benefactor of the New York Academy of Medicine; honorary member of the New York Medical and Surgical Society; founder of the New York State Medical Association; founder of the New York County Medical Association; member of the Saint Nicholas Society; life member of the New York Historical Society; benefactor of the New York Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men; honorary member of the New York Physicians' Mutual Aid Association; honorary member of the American Ophthalmological Society; life member of the Charity Organization Society; and life member of the Huguenot Society of Amer-

ica. In the formation of the library of this last-named society he contributed liberal and important aid, both in books and manuscripts.

We have said that Abram Du Bois became a pupil of Dr. John Kearny Rodgers. It is well to say here a few words of this honorable member of the profession. He was one of the most accomplished surgeons and skillful physicians who have graced the profession of this city. He was the grandson of that eloquent, popular, and devout clergyman of this city, the Rev. John Rodgers, D.D. His father was Dr. John R. B. Rodgers, a graduate in medicine of the University of Edinburgh in 1785, a distinguished patriot and surgeon of the American Revolution, and professor of obstetrics in the first medical school established by Columbia College. A son of this worthy sire was John Kearny Rodgers, who early became a favorite pupil of that skillful and renowned surgeon, Dr. Wright Post, the professor of anatomy in, and president of, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York. He was graduated in arts at Princeton College, N. J., in 1811, and in medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York in 1816; he was also demonstrator of anatomy for his preceptor, house surgeon of the New York Hospital, and for many years surgeon of the same. He visited London in

1817, and became a pupil at the London Eye Infirmary, then lately founded by Dr. J. C. Saunders. It was here that he and the late Dr. Edward Delafield imbibed and formulated those ideas that led to the final establishment of the New York Eye Infirmary in 1820, of which he was the leading surgeon for more than thirty years. As an operator he was distinguished for ease, dexterity, and skill; and his operation of ligation of the left subclavian artery within the scalenus muscle, for aneurism, in October, 1845, was one of the surgical sensations of the day, and brought honor to him from the surgical world; it was the crowning glory of his surgical career. He was in an eminent degree truthful in all his habits, a man of sterling integrity, and a bold and earnest advocate of conservative surgery, believing most firmly in the truth of John Hunter's remark, that "when the surgeon takes up the knife he lays down his science." He abhorred quackery in all its forms, both in and out of the profession; hence we find him an early advocate, in 1846, of the formation of the New York Academy of Medicine, which was instituted in 1847 by "men good and true," for the avowed purpose of reorganizing the medical profession and purifying it from quackery in its various forms. His name leads its list of charter members, as men-



tioned in that instrument, granted by the legislature of New York in 1851. If alive, there would be no doubt where he would stand to-day ; his position would be that advocated so firmly and adhered to so nobly by his worthy pupil, Abram Du Bois.

Dr. Du Bois possessed a generous and active philanthropy, and in the quiet, unostentatious discharge of benevolence he was emphatically one whose left hand knew not what the right hand doeth. He was ever watchful of the needs of the profession, ever ready to extend a generous aid toward supplying means that would advance the good of the profession. When, in 1876, the New York Academy of Medicine had, after years of zealous labor, purchased a building and furnished the requisites for a medical home pledged for the improvement and use of the profession ; and when the rapid growth of the institution caused thereby had extended beyond the funds and means at its command, Dr. Du Bois, seeing the wants of the institution, although not a member of the academy, volunteered gifts which, in the aggregate, amounted to nearly fifteen thousand dollars, and which led to improvements in the building and library that greatly increased the usefulness of the institution.

It becomes our duty to allude to Dr. Du Bois' zeal and labor in helping to found the New York

State Medical Association, an institution in which he ever felt a deep and abiding interest. His wise counsel and his labor did much to facilitate and hasten the desired success which has followed. He ever watched with an earnest and appreciative interest the scientific work of the Association, and so long as his health permitted was present at its annual meetings. At the annual meeting of 1891, the Association passed resolutions of respect to his memory. (See p. 25.)

Dr. Du Bois, we have intimated, was a man of strong convictions, and, in the discharge of what he believed to be duty, his courage never failed. He was of a generous and noble nature, ever ready to defend the right with his whole soul, and to extend unseen aid to the needy and unfortunate of the profession.

On the eighth of November, 1838, he married Catharine M. Brinckerhoff, of Fishkill, N. Y. She proved a most worthy and loving companion, a beloved wife and a devoted mother. They had issue, two sons and one daughter, who survive, with their affectionate mother, to mourn his death.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE ALMSHOUSE OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

*Copy of letter from the Board.*

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONERS OF ALMSHOUSE, }  
NEW YORK, *April*, 1838. }

SIR:

On presenting you the enclosed resolutions, passed and recorded at a meeting of the Commissioners of the Almshouse, held on the ninth day of February last, we have the further gratification of conforming to them, in asking your acceptance of a case of surgical instruments, which have been manufactured by one of the best artists, under the directions of our mutual friend, Dr. Benjamin Ogden. We do not doubt that their use, in the course of your practice, will aid you in accomplishing those beneficial results, which exalt the science you possess, and give it the Samaritan character. Performing this duty in our official character, reanimates those feelings of individual regard which have been heightened by every notice of your kind services to the unfortunate, and bids us proffer the

continuance of that regard, and tender our most hearty wishes for your health and prosperity.

P. W. ENGS, JAS. H. BRAINE, Z. RING, PETER PALMER, SEIXAS NATHAN,	}	<i>Commissioners.</i>
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EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE ALMSHOUSE, BRIDEWELL, AND PENITENTIARY.  
YEAR 1837.

“The prison fever had, some time previous to this, broken out in the Bridewell, among the ‘court prisoners,’ and some cases had occurred in the Almshouse; thus the list of this class of patients became alarmingly large, and, under the then state of the house, excited apprehensions of contagion; and the public are indebted (under Providence) to the superior skill and untiring exertions of the resident physician, Dr. Benjamin Ogden, for the arrest of its progress, notwithstanding the influx of cases of a similar disease from among foreign emigrants, subsequently arriving, filled the hospital to overflowing. Fortunately, at this juncture, Drs. Abram Du Bois and David L. Eigenbrodt, formerly students in the establishment under

Dr. Ogden, gentlemen who had in 1834 perilled their lives in the cure of cholera, came to our relief, and by *gratuitous* service, for which our city owes them a debt of gratitude (more especially as Dr. Du Bois had been himself a subject of the prevailing fever, and barely escaped death), gave important and indispensable aid to the resident physician, which was seconded, in a manner deserving the highest commendation, by the students Messrs. Stamatioides, Casey, and Thompson."

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE ALMSHOUSE.

NEW YORK, *February 9, 1838.*

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted.

*Resolved:* That the timely, efficient, and extended labors of Drs. Abram Du Bois and David L. Eigenbrodt, in the hospital at Bellevue during the past year, claim the warmest acknowledgments of the Board on behalf of their fellow citizens.

*Resolved:* That we cannot consistently with a proper regard for such services permit them to go unrewarded by some token of gratitude.

*Resolved:* That a case of instruments be procured and presented to each of these gentlemen as a demonstration of the esteem with which we regard them as men of science, friends of humanity, and

public benefactors, and that the same be accompanied with these resolutions, and a letter signed by all the members of this Board.

*A copy from the Minutes.*

NEW YORK EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY,  
Thirteenth Street and Second Avenue.

NEW YORK, *November 9, 1891.*

MRS. ABRAM DU BOIS.

*Dear Madam:* I have been directed by the Directors of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary to transmit to you the enclosed preamble and resolutions unanimously adopted at the annual meeting held October 28, 1891.

In doing so, permit me to express my very sincere sympathy.

Respectfully yours,

GORHAM BACON, M.D., *Secretary.*

NEW YORK EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY.

NEW YORK, *November 7, 1891.*

The death of Dr. Abram Du Bois on August 29, 1891, removes from the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary one of its most devoted friends. For forty-eight years, of a long life of eighty-one years, he labored for its welfare. In 1843 he became one of its surgeons; from 1856 to 1869, he also served as

Secretary of the Board of Directors. In 1869 he became a Director; and at this resigning the position of surgeon, he was made consulting surgeon, which position he filled until his death; from 1875 to 1888 he acted as Second Vice-President.

He was a pupil of Dr. J. Kearny Rodgers, one of the founders of the Institution, and the enthusiasm of the preceptor for ophthalmic surgery found a ready response in the student, and led him to add to his medical equipment special opportunities for ophthalmic study in Great Britain and Paris. During the twenty-six years which he gave to active professional service in the Infirmary, he was not only most faithful in his work, but was always laboring to secure for the Institution the esteem and support of the public. Out of the large acquaintance in the best circles of New York life, he brought many friends to it, as for example Dr. Jacob Harsen, Dr. Beadle, Mr. Augustus Schell, and many others. His endeavors in this direction never flagged. The Infirmary was the object of his beneficence and solicitude to the end of his life. He was an active promoter of its removal from the scant accommodations in Mercer Street to the ample site in Second Avenue, and in our recent enlargement of the Institution he has shown a deep interest, both by his own liberality and by procuring

gifts from others. Our Institution has not had a more efficient and faithful friend than Dr. Abram Du Bois, and his name will be permanently identified with it.

Of his wider professional relations, and of his extensive influence as a physician in the community, it is not necessary to speak. It is

*Resolved*, That the Directors of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary hereby express their warm appreciation of the high personal and professional qualities of their late colleague Dr. Abram Du Bois, and their grateful recognition of his long and devoted service to the Institution. Much of its reputation and success have been due to his efforts: they honor his memory and regret his loss.

*Resolved*, That this preamble and resolutions be entered on the minutes, and a copy be transmitted to the family of Dr. Du Bois, together with the expression of the sincere condolence of the Directors of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary with them in their bereavement.

#### FISHKILL RURAL CEMETERY.

FISHKILL, NEW YORK.

At a meeting of the Trustees of the Fishkill Rural Cemetery, held October 28, 1891, the follow-



ing preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted :

WHEREAS, It has pleased the Father of all to remove from this earthly sphere the warm friend and liberal benefactor of our Cemetery, Dr. Abram Du Bois : therefore,

*Resolved*, That having enjoyed his friendship and appreciated his worth, we sincerely mourn the loss that his family, this institution, and the public in general have been called upon to sustain.

*Resolved*, That though we shall greatly miss his kind sympathy and valuable suggestions in our work of preserving and beautifying these grounds, we still have reason to rejoice that the wise and liberal provisions that he made will never die, but will continue to accomplish their beneficent purpose when we all, like him, shall have ceased from our labors.

*Resolved*, That we rejoice that a kind Providence gave him the ability, and also, what is more rare and desirable, the disposition, to make large and liberal bequests, not only to the Institution that we represent, but to many others calculated to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow creatures ; and that his benefactions shall stand as enduring monuments to his memory.

*Resolved*, That in our grief for our friend's depart-

ure, we have great cause for thankfulness that his valuable life was spared so long, that in his bodily weakness his mind was unimpaired, and that his closing hours were calm and peaceful.

*Resolved*, That these resolutions be entered in our book of minutes; that they be published in the papers of this town, and that a copy of them be transmitted to the family of our departed friend.

H. B. ROSA, *Secretary*.

#### NEW YORK STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

At the morning session of the eighth annual meeting of the New York State Medical Association, held in the city of New York, October 29, 1891, the committee appointed to draft resolutions on the death of Dr. Abram Du Bois presented their report, which, upon motion, was received and adopted.

#### *Report of Committee on Resolutions.*

The committee appointed to prepare resolutions on the death of Dr. Abram Du Bois beg leave to present the following:

Dr. Abram Du Bois died in the city of New York on the twenty-ninth day of August, 1891, aged eighty-one years. He was an earnest and active

member of the preliminary council which formulated and led to the organization of the New York State Medical Association, and a distinguished and honored member of the medical profession. Your committee offer the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That the New York State Medical Association, with deep and sincere regret, have learned of the death of ABRAM DU BOIS, M.D., one of the founders of this Association.

*Resolved*, That this Association duly appreciates and bears witness to his many virtues and great professional probity, and will ever cherish his memory for his generous charity both to the public and the profession of medicine.

*Resolved*, That we tender to the widow and family of the deceased our sincere sympathy in this their great bereavement.

*Resolved*, That a copy of the foregoing resolutions be sent to the relatives of the deceased; and that said report and resolutions be entered upon the minutes of this Association, and be published in the forthcoming volume of Transactions.

SAMUEL T. HUBBARD, M.D., *Chairman*.

SAMUEL S. PURPLE, M.D.

WILLIAM MCCALLOM, M.D.

NORTHERN DISPENSARY,  
Corner Waverly Place and Christopher Street.

NEW YORK, *November 6, 1891.*

The Trustees receive with sorrow the intelligence of the death of Dr. ABRAM DU BOIS, who died at his residence in this city, August 29, 1891, at the advanced age of eighty-one years.

Dr. Du Bois was appointed a consulting physician to this Institution in 1858; having served in that position continuously for thirty-three years, and a subscriber to its support for over thirty years.

*Resolved*, That this Board hereby expresses its sorrow for the loss of one so long connected with the interests of this Institution, and that this preamble and resolution be entered on the minutes; and a copy, attested by the Secretary, be sent to the family of the late Dr. Abram Du Bois.

.....	GEO. STARR, <i>First Vice-President.</i>
: L. S. :	
.....	CHARLES E. BOGERT, <i>Secretary.</i>

SAINT NICHOLAS SOCIETY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

*Secretary's Office*, No. 67 Wall Street.

At a stated meeting of the Saint Nicholas Society, held December 3, 1891, the following action was taken :

*Extract from the Minutes.*

The committee appointed at the last regular meeting of the Society to prepare a memorial of the death of Dr. Abram Du Bois, through Mr. Edward King, chairman of the committee, presented the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, and ordered to be spread upon the minutes, with the further direction that a copy thereof be sent to the family of Dr. Du Bois.

*Resolved*, That by the death of Dr. Abram Du Bois, who for more than twenty-five years has been one of its physicians, the Saint Nicholas Society has lost a most prominent friend and adviser, who always took a deep and active interest in its affairs, and endeared himself to all by his genial manners and rare social qualities.

He held many positions of trust in the medical world, and was always known as a gentleman of high character, and justified in every instance the confidence bestowed upon him.

His ability and integrity as a man and physician made him an honor not only to his profession and the community in which he lived, but shed a luster upon our membership.

[A true copy.]

GEORGE G. DE WITT, *Secretary*.

## MANHATTAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

At a stated meeting of the Board of Directors of the Manhattan Life Insurance Company, held on the eighth day of September, the president announced the death of Dr. Abram Du Bois, a member of the Board, and for many years the Medical Examiner of the Company, whereupon it was unanimously

*Resolved,* That the members of this Board have learned with sincere sorrow of the death of their late associate and friend Dr. Abram Du Bois. The connection of Dr. Du Bois with this Company was from its organization, he having been appointed to the important office of Resident Physician in the first month of its existence, and continued as such until the month of January, 1889, when he resigned the position. His election as a member of the Board took place in 1877, and continued to the time of his death. Dr. Du Bois was zealous and faithful in the discharge of the duties of his office, bringing to it a rare adaptation, especially in view of the fact that at that early day there was nothing to lead and guide in the way of statistics and the experience of life insurance companies, such as are now available, and of such great value to the medical department. Dr. Du Bois held the affectionate regard of all his associates, and they

deem it proper that they should enter this tribute to his memory on their minutes, as a mark of respect to him, and a token of sincere sympathy to his family.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family.

WM. C. FRAZEE, *Secretary*.

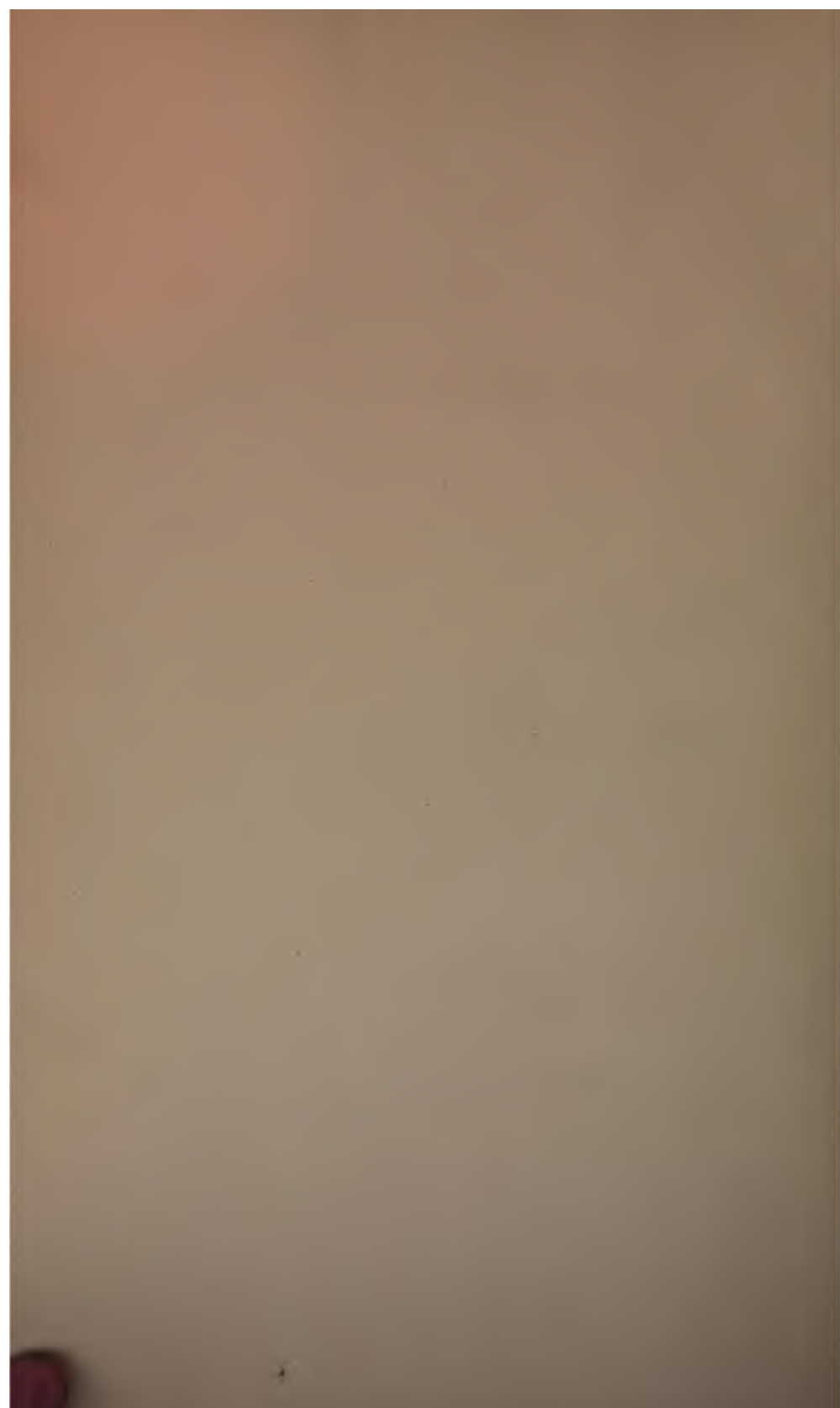
NEW YORK, *September 9*, 1891.













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